

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Washington, D. C. 20314

OM 600-1-40

DAEN-PEO-M

Memorandum  
No. 600-1-40

25 February 1985

Personnel - General  
HAZARDOUS WEATHER CONDITIONS

1. Purpose. This Memorandum prescribes the policies for dismissals and closings during hazardous weather.
2. Applicability. This memorandum is applicable to all HQUSACE/OCE elements.
3. References.

a. CPR 990-2, 610.S-3

b. AR 1-13

4. Requirements.

a. Insure an operational capability which provides a work force adequate to respond immediately to any situation which may arise and be capable of carrying out assigned missions. Certain positions require they be staffed under all weather conditions.

b. The following are designated as essential HQUSACE/OCE staff positions, the occupants of which will remain available by telephone (at home or at the office) during normal duty hours when hazardous weather conditions exist: Chief of Engineers; Assistant Chief of Engineers; Chief of Staff; Directors; Chief, Office of Personnel; and Chief, Office of Administrative Services.

5. Responsibilities.

a. Directors, the ACE, the Chief of Staff and Chiefs, OP, and OAS will establish and maintain in current status a roster of position titles considered essential for staffing their respective office under all emergency weather conditions, designating in writing each primary and alternate designee selected each position. Consideration and continuous review (at least quarterly) of such factors as distance from residence to place of work, access to highways, means of transportation available and general health, will be given to assure continued appropriateness of designations and ability of individuals to comply with reporting instructions. Report changes as they occur and submit annually to DAEN-ZDX, Chief of Staff a revised roster effective as of the last working day in October.

b. Designees will:

(1) In the event a dismissal announcement is issued due to hazardous weather conditions, continue on the job until such time as they receive personal release by their supervisor, or the supervisor\*s designated representative.

(2) Monitor radio (WMAL - AM 630) announcements issued by the U. S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) regarding Federal employee reporting instructions. In the event an excused leave announcement is released during non-duty hours to the Washington Metropolitan Area by the news media, will follow the reporting for work or standby requirements imposed upon them in the document which designates their position as essential.

c. The Duty Officer during non-duty hours, will monitor radio (WMAL -AM 630) announcements to keep apprised of OPM reporting instructions for Federal employees.

d. The Chief of Staff (or designated official) upon receiving instructions from OSA concerning releases during duty hours, will:

(1) Secure COE decision affecting HQUSACE/OCE.

(2) Initiate the Telephone Notification Chain (Appendix A) by notifying DAEN-PEO-M who will, in turn, notify all HQUSACE/HQ Directors and Chiefs of Separate Offices through their identified points of contact.

(3) Notify designees, noted in paragraph 4b above, of any special instructions regarding release or reporting for duty.

e. HQUSACE/OCE Supervisors will:

(1) Assure their employees are made aware of the provisions of this OM.

(2) Identify, in writing, essential employees.

(3) Assure proper application of this OM regarding dismissals and in determinations of employee absence status.

f. HQUSACE/OCE employees will remain aware of the provisions of this OM and, during non-duty hours, monitor radio (WMAL - AM 630) announcements if special hazardous weather instructions from OPM are anticipated.

6. Determinations. The Office of Personnel Management consults extensively with the National Weather Service, the District of Columbia, and suburban governments, Metro, and all area highway departments whenever hazardous weather conditions occur. Once this information has been considered, the Office of Personnel Management, after consultation with the Office of Cabinet Affairs, decides whether special leave policies, such as closure, delayed arrival or early dismissal, are appropriate, and announces the decision through agency personnel offices (during business hours) or through the news media (if conditions develop overnight).

OCE employees stationed at Humphrey\*s Engineering Center will follow the reporting and dismissal determination made by the CDR/DIR H.E.C.S.A.

7. Conditions Affecting Early Dismissal, Closure, and Authorization of Delayed Arrival and Liberal Leave.

a. Condition "Early Dismissal" will be disseminated during duty hours.

(1) Early dismissal is appropriate when weather and street conditions are expected to create serious and hazardous afternoon/evening traffic conditions. The success of Early Dismissal is dependent upon Metro\*s ability to mobilize adequate bus and rail service and the gradual release of employees so the streets and the Metro system do not become overloaded. Therefore, Early Dismissal will authorize Federal agencies to dismiss employees at a specific time, but on a staggered basis according to prescribed agency groupings. Department of Army is included in Group III. Army civilian and military personnel will be released during snowstorm conditions only by the official notification procedures referenced in subparagraphs 3a and b above and this document.

(2) Individual supervisors, Directors and Chiefs of separate offices will not make independent determinations to administratively excuse employees due to weather conditions. Regardless of communications media announcements which may imply "early dismissal" by agency grouping is a mandate, the COE must separately authorize "early dismissal" after receiving word from the Office, Secretary of the Army. Supervisors will be notified through their organizational superiors when the COE has authorized "early dismissal ." Supervisors may be liberal in granting leave (annual leave or leave without pay in lieu of annual leave) to civilian employees who request it prior to an "early dismissal" determination. Employees will not be excused from duty without first obtaining prior approval of their supervisors.

b. During Non-Working Hours three situations are typical

(1) Federal offices open as usual and tardiness may be excused. This decision is based on conditions developing during nonworking hours which make it difficult for employees to arrive at work on time. This situation might arise, for example as a result of an ice storm which has made roads treacherous and has delayed transportation. In such a situation, HQUSACE/OCE supervisors may excuse a reasonable amount of tardiness without charge to leave. Annual leave or leave without pay should be charged for absences in excess of the tardiness period the supervisor determines is reasonable after review of the facts in each case. The absence may be excused without charge to leave when the employee makes every reasonable effort to get to work ontime but was unable to do so. Determining factors in this decision include: Distance between the employee\*s residence and place of work; mode of transportation normally used; efforts by the employee to get to work; and success other employees similarly situated had in being able to report for work. In no case will excused absence be more than 2 hours for tardiness.

(2) Federal offices open as usual but, due to the varying impact of the situation, a liberal leave policy applies. This is a situation in which the emergency conditions are not uniform in their effect on the area. The entire Federal sector is not evenly impacted, but there are areas so seriously affected that employees are prevented from getting to work. Because of the scattered effect of the situation, a liberal annual leave or leave without pay policy is in effect. A liberal leave policy permits employees to utilize annual leave or leave without pay, without the necessity for obtaining advance approval or providing detailed justification. In HQUSACE/OCE the employee desiring to take leave must attempt to notify someone at the office within two hours from the beginning of his/her tour of duty that he/she is taking leave. Under these conditions, absences may be charged to annual leave, leave without pay, or the employees may be excused without charge to leave or loss of pay, depending on the individual circumstances. The basic criterion should be whether the employees made a reasonable effort to get to work. If it is determined that a reasonable effort was made, it would be appropriate to excuse the absence without charge to leave and without loss of pay. Determining factors in this decision include: Distance between the employee's residence and place of work; mode of transportation normally used; efforts by the employee to get to work; and success other employees similarly situated had in being able to report to work. A standard news media announcement provided by the Office of Personnel Management may read as follows:

"Delayed Arrival/Liberal Annual Leave or Leave Without Pay Policy.

Although emergency conditions do exist, we have officially been advised that all Federal offices will be open today (tomorrow) and employees are expected to report to work on time. However, because of the severe weather, employees, except those who have been designated as essential personnel, may be granted a reasonable amount of excused absence if they experience commuting delays and may also take a reasonable amount of annual leave or leave without pay today (tomorrow) without prior authorization."

(3) The closure situation is when weather conditions dictate that most Government offices should not open for the day. Only those employees in critical positions will be expected to report to work. Those employees may be granted a reasonable amount of excused absence if they experience commuting delays. All other eligible employees will be granted excused absence for the day. Employees not eligible are those who were in a non-pay status on the days immediately before and after the day the office is closed. A standard news media announcement provided by OPM may read as follows:

"Closure. We have been officially advised that due to the hazardous weather conditions all Federal offices will be closed today (tomorrow). Employees, except those who have been designated as essential personnel, will be excused from work."

8. Leave Determinations. Whether an employee should or should not be charged leave for an absence depends upon his or her duty or leave status at the time of dismissal, determined as follows:

a. If the employee was on active duty and was excused at the time specified for Group III, there is no charge to leave for the remaining hours of the work shift following dismissal.

b. If the employee was on duty and departed on leave after official word of release was received, but before the time set for dismissal, leave is charged only from the time the employee departed until the time set for dismissal. Conversely, leave is charged for an employee who was on duty and departed prior to the release announcement for the remainder of the duty day.

c. If the employee was scheduled to report for duty after an initial period of leave and dismissal is given before the employee can report, leave is charged until the time set for dismissal.

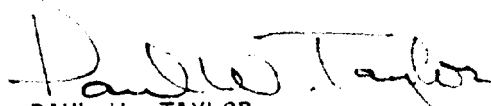
d. If the employee was absent on approved leave for the entire work shift, the entire absence is charged to appropriate leave (e.g., annual, sick, for LWOP, as applicable). (NOTE: Earned compensatory time off or credit hours may be used, as appropriate, in lieu of leave.)

9. Employees eligible for excused absence. All employees paid on a per annum basis irrespective of their appointment tenure, and those hourly, per diem, and piece work employees (other than consultants and experts) who have appointments not limited to 90 days or less or who have been currently employed for a continuous period of 90 days under one or more appointments without a break in service may be excused without charge to leave or loss of pay. Employees who are ineligible for excused absence will be placed on annual leave or, if they have no leave to their credit, in a non-pay status.

10. Variable Work Schedule Impact. Employees should not work and may not earn credit hours during administrative dismissal periods resulting from hazardous weather conditions. Those critical employees who must work when all others are excused are not entitled to compensatory time, credit hours or overtime pay. Delayed openings of a prescribed number of hours will suspend variable work schedules for that day. For the purpose of this regulation, every employee will work a standard 8 ½ hours tour of duty 0745 hours through 1615 hours. Therefore, an announced situation of "Delayed Opening of two hours for all Federal offices in the D. C. Metropolitan Area" would have all HQUSACE/OCE employees expected to report at 0945 hours.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

APPENDIX A

  
PAUL W. TAYLOR  
Colonel Corps of Engineers  
Chief of Staff